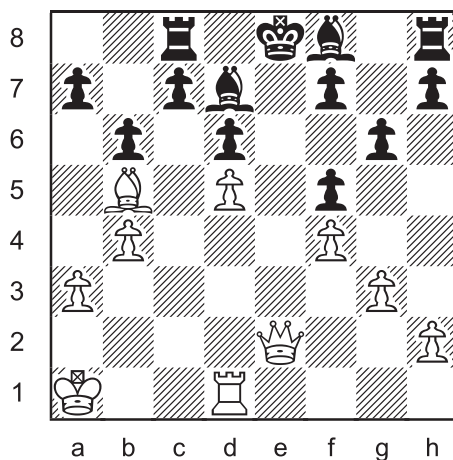## SWITCHEROO OCTUPLETS

number 31   April 13, 2013

The eight switcheroos in this column are *approximate twins.* Only one or two things are different in each diagram. That's enough to change the solution. The first puzzle is quite easy. The other siblings may be more challenging.
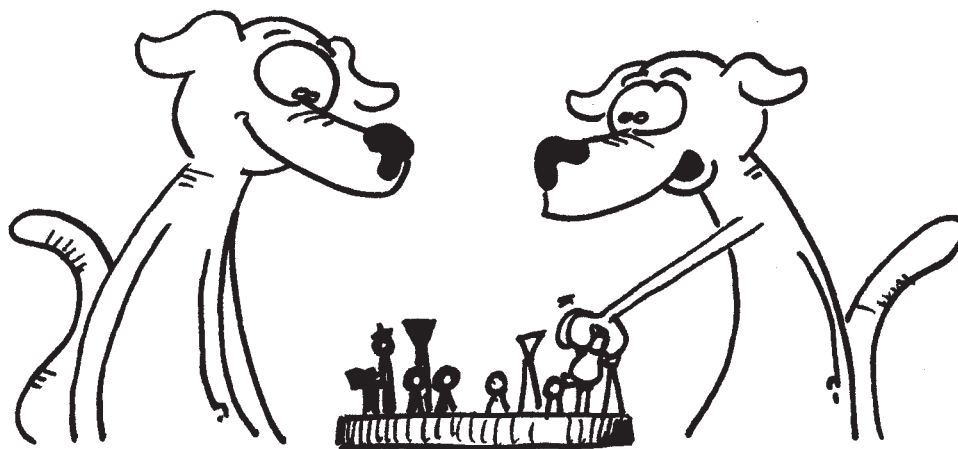
Switcheroo 22

Switch two pieces so that
Black is in checkmate.

In case you're new to *switcheroos*, here are the rules. The goal is to put the black king in checkmate by switching the position of two pieces. No actual chess moves are made. The pieces simply swap squares.

Any two pieces can switch places. Colours do not matter. You can trade white with white, black with black, or white with black. Switching the black king is a common trick.

The position after the switch must be legal. A position is legal if it could occur in an actual game. This rule implies several things.

a) A pawn cannot be put on the 1st or 8th rank.

b) Both kings cannot be in check.

c) There must be a way to reach the resulting position with a legal white move. Impossible checks, especially double checks, are a frequent "violation".

d) In some cases, *retrograde analysis* may be required to decide if the position after a switch is legal.

In many switcheroos, including these octuplets, the black king is already in check. That doesn't necessarily make the puzzles any simpler.
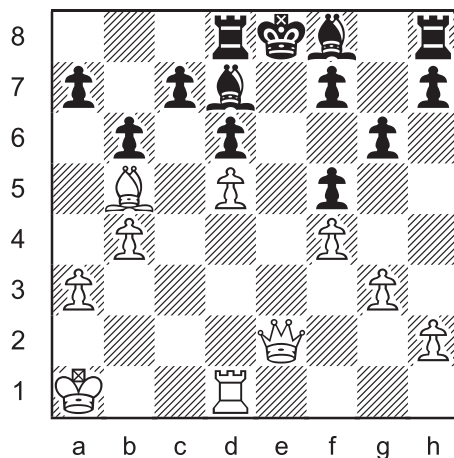
Switcheroo 23
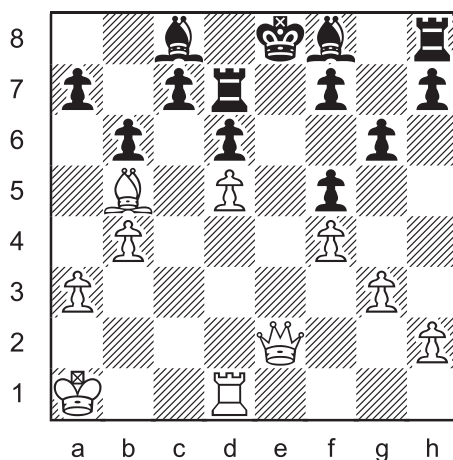
Switch two pieces so that
Black is in checkmate.

For problems 1-21 and more information on switcheroos, see columns 4, 10, 16, and 23 in the archives.
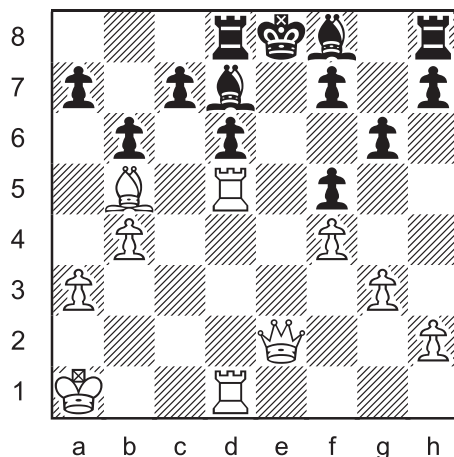
Switcheroo 24

Switch two pieces so that
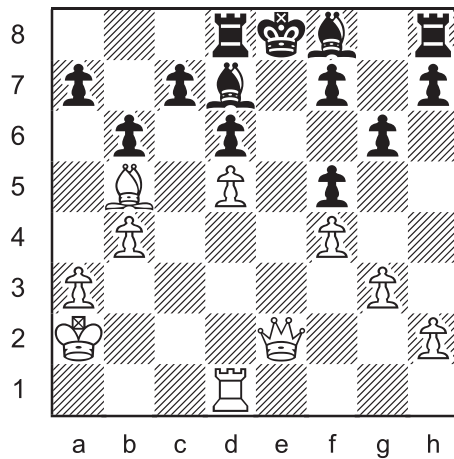Black is in checkmate.

As explained in the solution pages, the previous puzzle demonstrates an unusual point regarding pawn switches. The only white pawn that could legally switch with the black bishop on d7 was the one on a light square (d5). Switching with other white pawns would give Black two dark-square bishops, which is impossible with eight black pawns on the board.
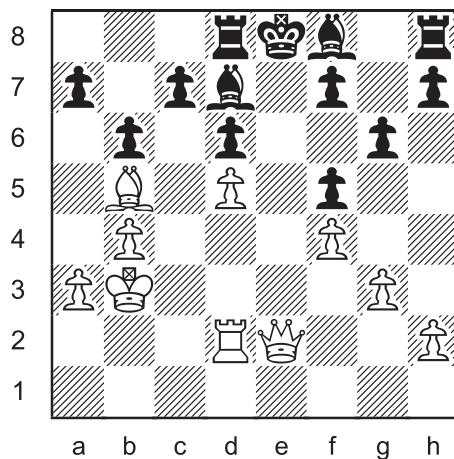
Switcheroo 25

Switch two pieces so that
Black is in checkmate.

Switcheroo 26

Switch two pieces so that
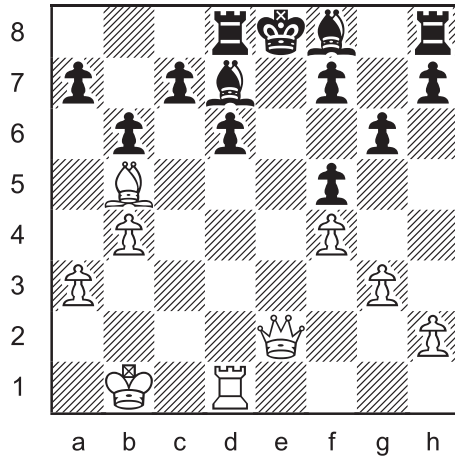Black is in checkmate.

Switcheroo 27

Switch two pieces so that
Black is in checkmate.

Puzzling Sidenote. Isn't it odd that October is the tenth month when its first syllable means "eight"?
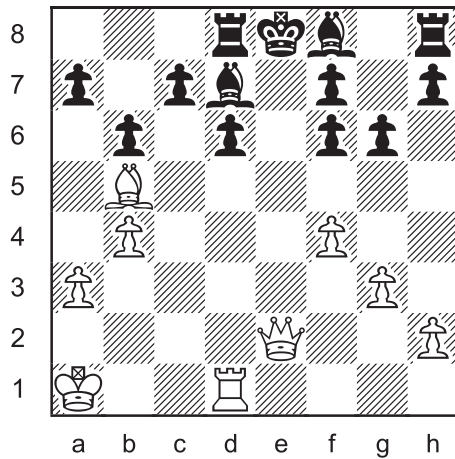
The original Roman calendar (750 BC) only had ten months and October was in fact the eighth. However, when the Romans eventually added two more months, they put them at the beginning of the year?! That made October number ten. A linguistic goof that has endured nearly three millennia.
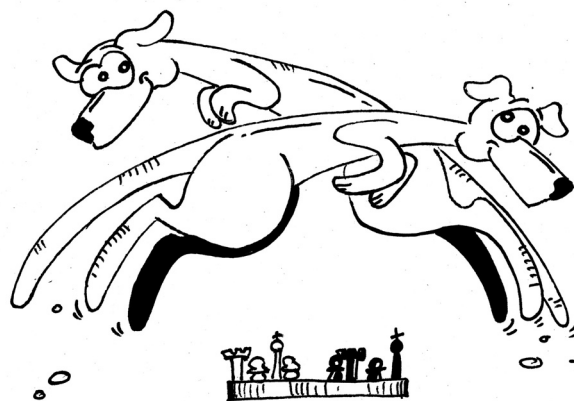
Switcheroo 28

Switch two pieces so that
Black is in checkmate.

Switcheroo 29

Switch two pieces so that
Black is in checkmate.

SOLUTIONS

All switcheroos by J. Coakley. 24, 25, 26 are from *Winning Chess Puzzles For Kids Volume 2* (2010). The others are *ChessCafe.com* originals (2013).

PDF hyperlinks. You can advance to the solution of any puzzle by clicking on the underlined title above the diagram. To return to the puzzle, click on the title above the solution diagram.
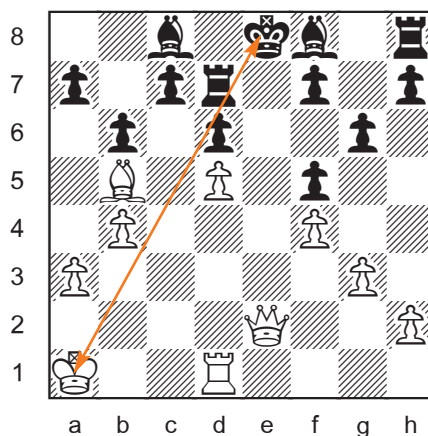
Switcheroo 22
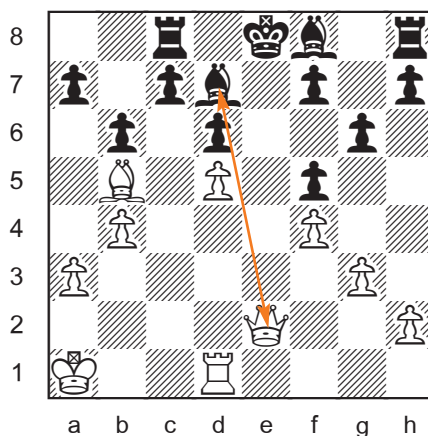
Bd7↔Qe2

I doubt anyone got stumped by this one.
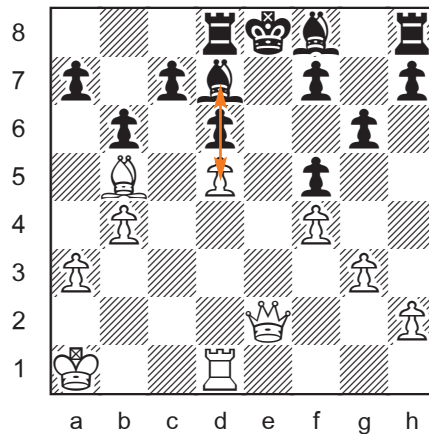
Switcheroo 23

Ka1↔Ke8

Swapping kings was bound to happen once!?

(Bc8↔Rd1? is an impossible double check.)
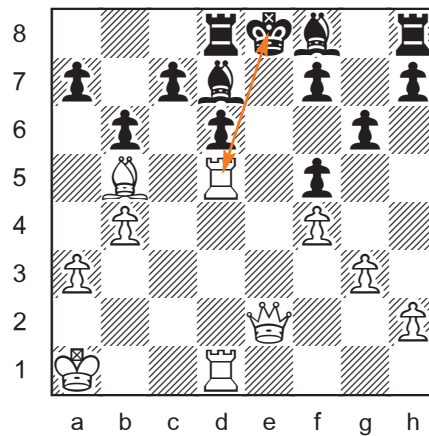
Switcheroo 24

d5↔Bd7

The last move was double check by e6xd7#.

The black bishop on d7 can only be switched with the white d-pawn. If it switches with any other white pawn, then Black will have two dark-square bishops. That would make the position illegal since Black has eight pawns on the board, making a promotion impossible.
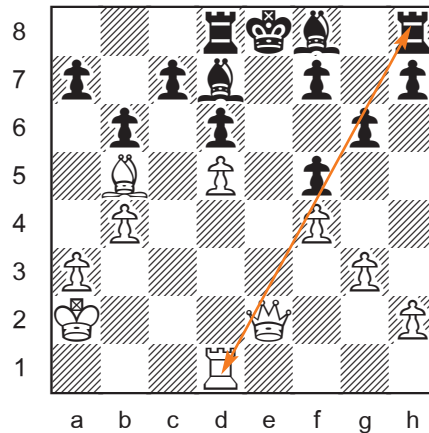
Switcheroo 25

Rd5↔Ke8

(a3↔Bd7? is an illegal position because Black has two dark-square bishops and eight pawns. Same thing for switching Bd7 with other white pawns.)
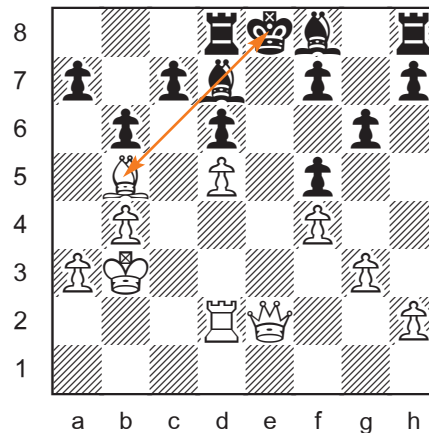
Switcheroo 26

Rd1↔Rh8

The white rook on h8 pins the black bishop on f8, preventing ...Be7.

(d5↔Bd7? puts both kings in check.)

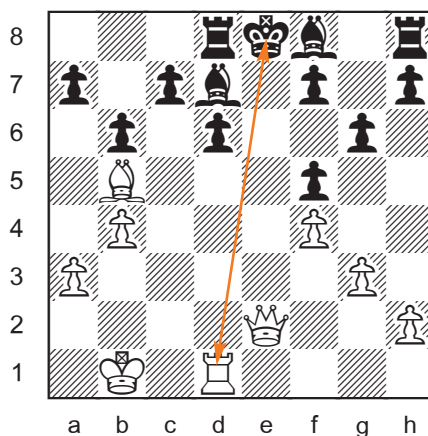(Switching Bd7 with a3 or other white pawns on a dark square is illegal. See 24.)

Switcheroo 27

Bb5↔Ke8

The black king really gets around in these puzzles.

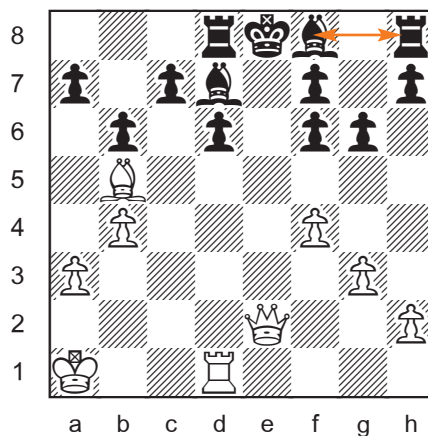(Switching Bd7 with any white pawn is illegal, as above.)

Switcheroo 28

Rd1↔Ke8

With the white king on b1, the black king cannot go to c1.

Switcheroo 29

Bf8↔Rh8

This black-for-black switch works because the long dark diagonal is closed by the pawn on f6.

Until next time!